GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4173
ANSWERED ON:20.04.2000
PRICE RISE OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES
HOLKHOMANG HAOKIP

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the price of the essential commodities are continuously increasing in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government are failed to control the price-rise of the essential commodities and protect the interest of common people;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken and proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD)

(a) : During the last one year, the prices of most of the essential commodities have remained at reasonable levels or declined. The percentage variations in the Wholesale Price Indices (WPI) based on 1993-94 base year in respect of selected essential commodities for the last one year as on 1.4.2000 are given below:

Commodity	Percentage variation (1.4.2000) (3.4.1999)
Rice	0.7
Wheat	6.9
Gram	14.9
Arhar	-1.0
Sugar	4.1
Groundnut oil	-2.1
Mustard oil	-14.1
Vanaspati	-22.8
Tea	-3.6
Potato	-9.8
Onion	-40.8
Salt	-14.5

(b) to (d) : The Government has taken a number of steps to control the prices and augment the availability of essential commodities in the country. Apart from certain long term measures to increase production of essential goods, imports of items which are in short supply, like pulses and edible oils are allowed under OGL. Pulses are allowed to be imported at zero per cent import duty. Export of onion has been placed under quantitative restriction. Some of the essential commodities like rice, wheat, palmolein and kerosene are also supplied to the population living below the poverty line through the outlets of public distribution system at below market prices. Stringent actions are being taken against hoarders, black marketers and others indulging in unfair trade practices under the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act by the State/UT Governments.